

TOMMY TEDDY BEAR #1
A Children's Play

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TOMMY TEDDY BEAR #1

TIME AND PLACE

Inside each child's imagination. The North Sea; Scotland; and beyond.

CHARACTERS AND SPECIAL PROPS

Storyteller(s), female.

Ginger, a young girl, pre-11 (non-speaking part).

Actors in costume as an owl, a cat, a spoon, carrots and pomegranates (non-speaking parts).

A teddy bear; two whales; Bong-Trees; and a small space ship.

Puppets; wooden and/or cardboard cutouts.

... in the dialogue indicates a thoughtful break.

SCENE 1

The North Sea. A small sailboat in it.

A young girl (and her parents) in the boat.

(The actual presence of the parents in the boat is not necessary.)

Two whales.

Enter the Storyteller(s).

STORYTELLER

When Tommy Teddy Bear was a tiny teddy bear,
he took a great big teddy bear's fall.
From the back of a goose, a long-necked goose,

**A goose enters, flying.
Tommy is sitting on its back as it flies.**

on the crest of the wind with the screech of an owl,
he fell and he fell, and he yelled and he yelled.

**Tommy falls off the goose and, head over
heels, somersaults slowly into the water.**

From the back of a loose and a high-flying goose,
with the cry of a peacock, and the shriek of a cat,
he tossed and he tumbled through clouds of pink lace.
He flopped and he bumped all over the place.
And then with a splat and a bend in his knee,
he splashed in the lap of the waves of North Sea.
Yes, he dropped with a plop and up to his ears,
in waters off Scotland, the sea of salt tears.

**After a splash, Tommy floats on the
water.**

Now, the sea of salt tears is a home to its own.
It's a place for the fishes and for creatures alone.
It's a place for some sailors and mysterious unknown.
But no place for a teddy, to find Tommy a home.

A lonely little teddy, drifting at sea,
looking and looking for someone to see.
Fish and more fish, and a great big whale,
eels, and stray seals, and a distant sail.

**A whale swims near; and a sailboat sails
into view in the distance.**

A sail in the distance attached to a boat,
tacking and trimming where Tommy's afloat.

STORYTELLER

“O wonderful whale, would you give me a ride?
I so need a ride,” the teddy bear cried.

The whale heard the words, with a bit of surprise –
Tommy’s too weeny for walloping whale eyes.
He looked and he looked, but he couldn’t see,
where in the world tiny Tommy might be.
So he circled about, blowing water up high,
till again he could hear the teddy bear’s cry.

A whale spout or two.

Tommy is lifted atop the whale.

“O thank you, fine whale, for finding small me,
I’m flying atop your rain from the sea.”
Up and down, up and down, they started to play,
riding waves and the whale spouts till noon of the day.
Catching blue and sea green, and a far-away white –
the sail of the sailboat was still in their sight.

Humpty bump, humpty bump, Tommy bounced on his ride,
when, smack, swam another whale alongside.

A second whale swims up to them.

A girl friend of Moby’s came joining their swim;
and the frolicking pair plain forgot about him.

For the rest of the day, while the whales leapt around,
little Tommy got drenched, and nearly got drowned.
With the sun’s crimson setting, red-glowing the sky,
Oh! the sailboat’s white sail was so passing nearby.

The sailboat sails up to them.

“Just look! Mommy, look!” said a lass with curled hair,
“two jumbo whales, dancing, and a brown teddy bear.
Can’t you see the wee teddy, between their two streams?
Take me close, and I’ll scoop him. He’s the bear of my dreams.”

The girl scoops up Tommy into her arms.

STORYTELLER

Miss curly-haired bravery did just what she said,
which landed sweet Tommy a home on her bed.
“You’re the teddy already I’ve hugged in my mind.
You’re the perfect of snugglers I’ve dreamed I could find.”

SCENE 2

The girl, Ginger, dressed for bed, is in the bedroom of her seaside village home, drying Tommy with towels, and intermittently giving him big hugs. Around his neck is a chain with a key on it. The Storyteller describes the village, Ginger's home, her bedroom, and the small, hidden door which is off to the side.

Enter the Storyteller(s).

STORYTELLER

The girl is named Ginger who brought Tommy on home, where she'll care for the bear as the best of her own. She names him his name, Tommy's safe now and warm, companion, explorer, at Ginger's right arm.

The village she lives in is flush with green trees, which are kissed in the sunlight, and cooled by the breeze. Her house, on a hillside, looks down on white sands, that the waves smoothly brush with the gentlest of hands.

Off the mountain attending on high overhead, drops a brook that so glistens, like silver on thread. So sprightly and clear, the life living there seems to glide through the water like floating on air.

Built over that stream, on the side of a hill, stands her home that was made like a lumberman's mill. Its beams are of oak with a dark wooden floor, a roof to the heavens, and a small, secret door.

The Storyteller goes over to the "hidden" door in Ginger's bedroom and taps it.

And there in the nighttime, lights out, tucked in bed, Baby Ginger's awl, with thoughts in her head. At the side of her room hides the locked, magic door, behind which are kingdoms, and soldiers of war. Adventures for one, adventures for all, and anyone's teddy who doesn't think small. For children whose nature's exceptionally wise, there's a trail through that doorway to heights of surprise.

Lights dim. Ginger snuggles up in bed with Tommy.

STORYTELLER

But now is alone-time for sleepy young things;
to hush and stay quiet; set thoughts on their wings.
It's time for young eyes, their wishes to keep,
for girls and their teddies to both get their sleep.
To chill, and to nod, and to drift off to dreams,
riding geese and a sailboat, and silver moonbeams;
riding sailboats and geese in their dreams until dawn,
through a sky that will open with winks and a yawn.

Light returns; Ginger sound asleep.

STORYTELLER

In her sleep she imagines a queen and a goat.
No! Rather an owl on a rather large boat.
An Owl and a Feline, off to sea
in a boat that's as green as pea-green can be.

**An Owl and a Pussy-Cat, with an empty
jar, set off to sea in a pea-green boat.**

They took some money, and plenty of honey, plus a jar they put on the deck –
the money they brought, not the honey store-bought,
in a bag with a millionaire's check.
Setting sail on a lark, with no care in the dark,
they embarked open air with a jar,
to glide through the blue with nothing to do but deposit a star in their jar (empty
jar). To catch a falling star and put it in their jar and save it for a rainy day.

“O Kitty, my love, lovely Kitty, my dove, what a beautiful Miss Tigress you are.
Yes, you are. What a beautiful tigress you are.”

“Sweetest Owl, let's not linger; I've an itch on my finger;
too long unwedded we've tarried;

I yearn by the Spring, the glorious Spring, I yearn by the Spring to be married.
Oh, we must have our wedding by Spring.”

“But what, you suppose, are our wedding clothes? And what do we do for a ring?
Silly Thing. Oh what can we do for a ring?”

They sailed on their way, for a year and a day,
to the land where the Bong-Tree grows.
And there in a dune stood a smiling spoon, with a ring in a dish at its toes,
at its toes; with a ring in a dish at its toes.

Bong-Trees (see a possible example following the end of the play script) and an adult-sized smiling spoon (with a dish at its toes) come on stage.

A full moon rises.

STORYTELLER

O happy spoon! On golden moon! O wonders that dreams can produce!
The journey at last is a thing of the past.
They've escaped from the ends of the Earth!

The moon sets, and in its places rises a full Earth.

And there in the sand – in the sand, hand in hand –
they danced by the light of the Earth.

Yes, the Earth!

They danced on the moon, in a dune with a spoon,
in the light of the Earth, on the moon!

But why, girls and boys, to the moon did she go?
Oh why to the *moon* in her sleep?
Is that the sole place where Bong-Trees can grow?
Or the length to which dreams can leap?

O Bongs will whirl, and Bong-Trees play,
where pinwheels spin and rainbows stray.
Where sideways rain and fireflies glide
in mystery groves at eventide.

Spots of firefly lights dance across the stage.

There are no Bongs on our salty globe.
You'll find not a one, with probe after probe.
Not if you search by day and by night
with millions of eyes and every flashlight.

No! Bong-Trees thrive in a different sky,
with patches of orange and magenta nearby.
In spaces out there our eyes cannot see,
on the back of the moon, mysteriously.

STORYTELLER

Discovered in June are the forces which reign,
far side of the moon, in its hidden terrain.
On the side we can't see are kinetic waves,
which produce, it must be, a most curious haze.

Some people may claim that the moon is all dry,
as dry as the oldest of cheeses can be.
But that is because the moon to their eye
is front face alone, not its back two or three.

Scholars and others, all esteemed
(notwithstanding what seems and always has seemed),
opine that the moon waves have strength to ensnare
the whole of its moisture and all of its air.
Ensnare them in glens under pockets of green,
with bubbles of pumpkin and purple between.

It's wild! Little Friends, what new things will unfold:
How the moon's only pearl when it's not emerald gold.
When carbons on flashes of space gas appear,
a green is reflected at times of the year.
A dome that encloses two ranges in one –
two worlds that dwell under a cap that's been spun.

And that is the journey our girl and her bear
through the door in her room will venture to dare.
Next morning they'll plan the next morning to take
the flight of their lives, not asleep but awake.

SCENE 3

Ginger, dressed for an adventurous flight to the moon, picks up her bear Tommy, goes to the small, “hidden” door in her room, takes the key from around Tommy’s neck, opens the door with his key, and crawls through.

On the other side is a hill (stairs) which she climbs, holding Tommy in her right hand. At the top of the stairs is a form of “spaceship” they can fly in without the need of rocket boosters. She climbs in, holding her bear.

Enter the Storyteller(s).

STORYTELLER

On the far side of the moon there’s a massive green bubble,
invisible to us, invisible to trouble.

Larger than anything like it on Earth.

A towering dome, many moons in its birth

We can’t see it. And if we can’t see it, Einstein says it isn’t there.

But it is.

And inside the green bubble are two connecting valleys –

one, orange-colored, like spooky Halloween,

and one, plum-colored, like grape soda –

caused by jets of particles pulsating from outer space through the kinetic waves
on the surface of the backside of the moon.

**Into a large green space Ginger and
Tommy “fly” the spaceship and get out.**

STORYTELLER

Believe it or not, inside that green dome creatures abide and vegetables roam.

Vegetable creatures, almost our size, roam around, walking, alive.

Carrot-like critters, and pomegranate balls.

**Carrot-like critters and pomegranate
balls enter the green space on stage.**

We call them “carrots” and “pomegranates,” because of how they look –
but they really aren’t – and they certainly don’t feel or taste anything that way.

They move around on tendrils, with sprouts, in the middle, for arms and hands.

Carrots are up and down, straight and skinny, serious stiffs.

Pomegranates are comical, round, magenta balls, like fluffy, loveable hedgehogs,
without teeth or claws, of course, because they don’t need them.

They’re peace-loving plants that only eat water.

STORYTELLER

Close to where the pomegranates hide,
in a lilac-misted glade,
by a rim of the moon we've occasionally spied,
on the odd attempts we've made,
Ginger and her Tommy disembarked from the ship
(an hour from setting off on their trip),
climbing down to the surface of the moon's cratered face,
while dodging Bong-Trees that abound in that place.

Bong-Trees aren't walkers, or rollers carefree.
No stories in them, to tell you or tell me.
But that's no matter.

Ginger and Tommy, their feet on the moon,
came into the dome that I've told you about,
where they ran into a bushel of pomegranate folk.
And they couldn't help themselves.
They fell head over heels in love with those cuddly, adorable, vegetable things.
Purple, like eggplants or big Greek balloons, and wordless.
Not one could answer a single question.

So they sat on the spot,
in the midst of the land,
watching pomegranate tots,
roll about in the sand.
And remarkably, sitting there on the ground,
the pomegranate balls snuggling up, all around,
the two of them heard a most curious sound,
a sound without sound in their heads to astound.
They listened to rhythms, they knew not from where –
not a one of the creatures had a drum or a snare.

Then, all of a sudden, in walked the carrot-like creatures.
And they *talked!* Up a storm.
Asking how Ginger and Tommy had come, and how long were they there to stay?
But their words were not made of sound.
They came into Ginger's head like moving pictures.
Like trading thoughts with a bird flying by. Or a butterfly.
One had a name like snow falling. One like Old Age.
They told them endless stories about souls from the Earth who had come to visit
the moon.

STORYTELLER

Souls? You ask?
Oh yes. Featherweight souls.
Souls of cats, and monkeys, and baby seals.
Not the heavier ones.
Like elephants, whales, and moray eels.

[beat] You didn't know that animals have souls, too?
Well, they do.
And moral standing, along with them.

No one had ever told Ginger or Tommy that.
Or that there's a dome on the back side of the moon, under which are green glens
with bubbles of pumpkin and purple between them.
Or that the whole place is so beautiful:
The green-shaded mountains, bordered by golden lace-work.
Or even that life exists up there:
Rolling balls, of a sort, and talking carrot stalks.
The heads of the carrots are found at the top,
as anyone might expect. With two piercing, indigo eyes; and ...
Listen to this, Children: No ears, no nose, and no mouth.
Because???
Because they don't need them.
Because they don't eat or breathe with their face.
And because they talk by sending out magnetic thought waves.

The pomegranate folk have eyes, too.
Tiger-like ... burning orange ...
which glitter like diamonds in the sky.
The thought-waves from the pomegranate people sound like music.
The thoughts of the carrot people are more like feathery syllables that rest gently
on your mind, without a noise.
And when the carrot people think-talk the way they do,
flashing white lights circle the tops of their heads like halos.

And, did I tell you? The carrot people danced with Ginger and Tommy.
Actually danced with them!
And while dancing the carrot folk explained how the force field on the moon
attracts half-pint souls from the Earth.
But only those not known for anything particularly heroic or awful in their lives.

STORYTELLER

Like, for example, cats.
The Earth won't let go of heavier souls.
You think I'm kidding about cats?
Cats' souls are notoriously featherweight.
They almost never worry about anything but themselves, and their naps.
Unlike dolphins.
There's not a single dolphin soul on the moon.
I don't know how many people have been saved from drowning by dolphins.
Quite a lot, I'm sure.

Another thing the carrot-tops explained to Ginger and Tommy was that life on Earth, as we so often forget, is a form of critical mass.
Too few, and life is a candle that can be blown out in the wind.
Many an extinct species, dinosaurs included, can attest to that.
Which means, as early as possible children should be taught to respect all life on Earth, even the ants.
Because if we don't give the Earth the respect it deserves, it might blow *us* away to the wind....

Carrots can be moody creatures.
Take April, for example.
To them, April is a cruel month, growing lilacs out of dead land.
Mixing memories with dull roots and spring rain, for a season, until gone.
They love flowers so much it's painful for carrots to lose them every year.

The last thing the carrots told our space travelers was a story about early in their history, and a carrot called NoCanDo.
Once, a long, long, long time ago there was born the greatest of all carrot kind.
His name was Legend, and he had a perfect carrot body, with courage, beauty, and strength surpassing all others.
But Creation didn't finish him with poise and patience.
Like kings in those days, he wanted everything he saw.
Life was too short, he claimed, to share anything.
And there was no one who could stop him, or teach him.
Legend was spoiled rotten.

One night, from a distant corner of space, came a comet which crashed into the moon near the Witches' Cauldron. And out of it crawled NoCanDo.
He had the only strength on the moon equal to Legend's. He was fierce, and rough, and crude; and hair flowed off his top, and along the sand, longer than Cinderella's gown.

STORYTELLER

NoCanDo's body was covered with matted wool like a wild ram.
He had no manners, none at all. And he was ugly as the Witch herself.
NoCanDo would just as soon crawl around like a baby than walk.
He wallowed in the sand with souls of lost guinea pigs.
He howled at the stars.
And he wandered foolishly among the steaming fissures of the Witches' Cauldron,
killing several of the scorpions that lived there.
When the Watchman of the Witches' Cauldron caught him,
he thought to bite NoCanDo in half, as he was supposed to do to trespassers.
But instead he said, "You're just a baby. I will not bite you. I will let you live."
After that, NoCanDo, in a fit took, moon rocks on which Legend had written
songs, and smashed them together to destroy them.
When Legend found out about it, he went after NoCanDo;
and a fierce battle between the two erupted, like a volcano.

In the end, there was no victor.
They wrestled in tight grip for forty days and thirty-nine nights.
On the fortieth night the mind of each man gave in to the concept of Friend;
and from that time forth they were glad in their hearts to be known by their
equal.
Legend took NoCanDo inside the green bubble, and taught him proper manners;
and NoCanDo taught Legend respect for others.

The Witches' Cauldron was outside the green bubble (just as the Bong Trees are);
and it was the most frightening place on the backside of the moon.
It used to be guarded by a huge giant, the Watchman I told you about,
who was neither orange, nor purple, but coal black, with crocodile teeth.
And he never slept.
No one ever dared go near the Witches' Cauldron,
even though the secret to everlasting life was supposed to be hidden there.
But Legend thought about it; and NoCanDo read his mind.
"You cannot go there," he mind-told his friend.
"It's too great a danger, even for one as strong as you."
But Legend had made up his mind. He had everything else on the moon.
He wanted immortality.
"Then let me go first," thought NoCanDo into Legend's mind.
"My ugliness, like his, may serve to calm the beast.
A good guide who knows the way goes in front to protect his friend."
What NoCanDo didn't tell Legend was that the Watchman had already caught
him, and turned him loose.

STORYTELLER

So, Legend allowed NoCanDo to go first;
and he followed him eight and a half minutes behind.
In a vision, Legend saw the giant about to snatch NoCanDo up;
and he hurried to NoCanDo's side, to fight with his friend for their lives.
But nothing they did subdued the Watchman.
Their strength each was the greatest of all carrots on the moon,
but not as great as the Watchman's.
Then NoCanDo told Legend about the Watchman's one weakness ... his eyesight.
And together they used the metal wrappings they wore to reflect the light of the
sun into the Watchman's eyes, and blind him.
Then they tripped him into a pit, where he fell down, unconscious.

Injured, and weakened, and tied with unbreakable ropes,
the Watchman awoke, and pleaded to Legend for his life.
And Legend was moved to mercy by the giant's words until NoCanDo spoke:
"Do not trust this villain. He's a monster.
If we do not destroy him now, while we have the chance, he will destroy us."

"Have not pity?" cried out the giant to NoCanDo.
"Was it not *your life* I spared,
when first I caught you in the Cauldron?
I remember clearly telling you,
'You're just a baby.
I will not bite you in two.
I will let you live.'"

Despite the giant's plea, NoCanDo persisted without conscience to put fear into
his friend's heart, finally persuading Legend to end the Watchman's life.
Which they did together.

Yet, as soon as the giant fell dead, they heard the rush of roaring water pouring
down.

The moon had pulled out the dams and dykes of its nether waters,
and a flood instantly submerged them. The ground shook with its sound and fury.
Never before or after had there been such a great flood to dampen the moon's
surface. The Witches' Cauldron, as well as the sky above, all but disappeared.
Legend survived, swimming for seven days. But when the flood subsided,
there lay his dear friend, drowned, next to the body of the slain Watchman.
Legend touched NoCanDo's heart, but it did not beat.
So he covered his friend, and began to rage like a lioness robbed of her cubs.

A picture of a raging lioness is projected on stage.

(See an example of a raging lioness following the end of the play script).

STORYTELLER

“If my friend is gone, my life is empty.
I want him back.” Legend roared out.
“We have travelled to the land of Death,
and here lie the wings and feathers of souls who can no longer fly.
Here is the black dust of sorrow.
I want my friend back.”

“You are a thief,” voices spoke to him, in his thoughts.
“Your face is drawn with grief and guilt because you are nothing but a thief.”

“I am no thief,” Legend replied.

“But you are. A thief of life.
You, yourself, have stolen the very thing for which you beg.
You have stolen a life. The Watchman’s life.
Go. Go and inscribe on the rocks of the moon what you have done,
and what you have learned.
Only then can meaning be restored to your life, and your friend’s life.”

And that was the end of the carrots’ story to them.
It was nearing dinnertime, so Baby Ginger and Tommy thanked the carrot and pomegranate people, said goodbye to them, went to their spaceship, and flew back home to Earth, wild with stories to tell.

Ginger takes Tommy back to the “spaceship” and gets in.

She waves down to the carrot and pomegranate people as the “ship” rises and returns them to the top of the “hill.”

When she got home she was so excited she could hardly talk.
She told her parents all about the adventure she and Tommy had had.
About the vegetable people, and everything.
And her parents listened with great amazement.

STORYTELLER

[beat] Well, Children, that's all for now.
Come again for more stories about Ginger and Tommy.
They go to all sorts of fascinating places:
dark forests; jungle rivers; and cybernet wars.

Bye-bye.

Storyteller exits and the lights dim.

END

Sample Sapling Bong-Trees



Photo by Thilina Alagiyawanna from Pexels

A raging lioness



Photo by Tomáš Malík from Pexels